

593 The parents normally enjoyed prestige in the family and the children took their advice into consideration even after they had become adults.

[674] The percentage of juvenile delinquency was not high and occurred mostly in the larger cities, rarely in rural communities. In the rearing of children, the Estonian mother played, of course, an important role. Being at home more than the father, her moral influence was usually decisive

[733] for her growing children. Even if the father was inclined to some weakness--of which the most common was excessive drinking--the mother in many cases was able to bring up a decent

- 562 family. In Estonian public life the important
593 role of the mother has been strongly emphasized. Estonian literature has many examples of affectionate relations between children and their mother. Mother's Day was observed every year in schools, churches and in public

- 562 gatherings. On those occasions the mothers of
593
[168] large families received rewards.

593 Family reunions tended to keep alive the feel-
[527] ing of belonging between relatives. The most
important family gatherings were weddings,
baptisms, funerals, birthday parties, and visits
during the chief holidays such as Christmas
and Easter. At these gatherings several genera-
tions met and shared their joys and sorrows. In
the everyday life each independent family lived
its own life, but in cases of emergency, all the
relatives usually helped as much as possible.

593 During the Communist regime the authori-
858 ties have often tried to force a wedge into family
unity. They try to use children as spies and
urge them to tell what the parents talk about at
home, who is visiting in their home, and such
things. Thus the parents have to distrust their

Annex "A," Subparagraph 1g,

Sociological Background

FAMILY

591 In former times the Votic families were much bigger than they are now. The sons usually remained in their father's house, brought their wives there and brought up their families. For this reason, the living rooms were then much bigger than now, each of them accommodating around 20 to 25 persons. Now the families are small, for the single nuclear family is the rule, and children after marriage now leave their parents' house and form their own separate households.

[594] The man is the head of the Votic family, but he does not act always as he pleases. In more important decisions the opinions of the wife and of the grown-up children are also taken into consideration. In former times, the position of the wife in the family seems to have been considerably lower than it is today. Characteristic are the words said by the bride's mother to her future son-in-law while handing over to him the bride's hair after it is cut: "Take both her hair and her head; you are her master and she is your slave." Important in this respect is also the hierarchy commonly used at the eating table. Oral tradition tells us that in olden times the table was the privileged eating place for the men. The women could take their meals around the fireplace or elsewhere, but the men always used to sit at the table. Even if the men and women ate at the same table, they did not eat

- 562 at the same time: the men ate first and the
264 women afterwards. When the families in earlier
596 times were very large, the eating was arranged
594 in three shifts: first the men sat at the table,
then the women, and finally the children. There
are also some data which indicate that formerly
the children were not admitted at all to the
table but had to eat on the floor from a common
wooden dish (naappa). For them a special table-
cloth (ursi) was spread on the floor.

In later times when families became smaller, both the men and women used to sit at the same table. But even then the sexes were segregated. The men, in general, sat at the side of the table which was towards the rear corner of the room, and the women opposite them. Due to this custom, the parts of the table have special names which are used even today. The rear part is called starika-lauta 'old man's table' and the front part ämmä-lauta 'woman's table.' They also say that the men sit jumalapoollez 'at God's side,' and the women sit alanurkkaz 'at the lower side.' The same custom of dividing the table according to sexes was observed also by the Ingrians.

Nowadays no such segregation is made and anyone can sit where he wishes.

[Estonian Constitution as of November 1, 1947]

641
1461 The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises and the abolition of unemployment.

Art. 91. The citizens of the Estonian SSR have the right to rest and leisure.

[1466] The right to rest and leisure is secured by the establishment of an eight-hour day for the overwhelming majority of workers, by the institution of annual vacations with full pay for factory and office workers, and by the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest homes and clubs for the accommodation of working people.

641
[657] Art. 92. Citizens of the Estonian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness or disability.

This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for working people, and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[871] Art. 93. Citizens of the Estonian SSR have the right to education.

This right is ensured by universal and compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including higher education; by a system of state stipends for the overwhelming majority of students of higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, state farms, and machine and tractor stations of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

• [522] Art. 94. Women in the Estonian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political and other public activity.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured by women being accorded an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, by state protection of the interests of mother and child, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[523] Art. 95. Equality of rights of citizens of the Estonian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political and other public activity, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 96. In order to ensure the citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Estonian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.

[Estonian Constitution as of November, 1947]

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000 - ~~exchange~~ - is punishable with all the severity of the law as the most heinous crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

666 Art. 106. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies - of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR and of the district, city, volost, settlement and village Soviets of Working People's Deputies - are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

Art. 107. Elections of deputies are universal; all citizens of the Estonian SSR who have reached the age of eighteen, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, education, domicile, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

[647] Every citizen of the Estonian SSR who has reached the age of twenty-one is eligible for election to the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR, irrespective of race, nationality, sex, religion, education, domicile, social origin, property status or past activities.

Art. 108. Elections of deputies are equal; each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

• [642] Art. 109. Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

Art. 110. Citizens serving in the Red Army have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

Art. 111. Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from village and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR are elected by the citizens by a direct vote.

Art. 112. Voting at elections of deputies is secret.

Art. 113. Candidates are nominated by election districts.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to public organizations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations and cultural societies.

Art. 114. It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electors on his work and on the work of his Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he may be recalled at any time upon decision of a majority of the electors in the manner established by law.

Art. 115. Elections to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Estonian SSR are held by election districts on the basis of representation fixed by the Ordinance Concerning Elections to Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Estonian SSR.